



ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT CABINET

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The Objective of the Quality Assurance Plan

Division of Water (DOW) promulgated a laboratory certification regulation specifically pertaining to wastewater laboratory certification in September 2013. The regulation (401 KAR 5:320) incorporated by reference a laboratory certification manual and application that included the requirements that laboratories must meet in order to become/remain a Kentucky certified laboratory. DOW also publishes many technical assistance documents that are available to assist laboratories in understanding and performing various certification requirements, including the preparation of a Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) and associated Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). These documents are intended to provide the user (and regulator) with the laboratory's approach to meeting the certification requirements. The QAP and SOPs must reflect the specific procedures established by, and utilized by, the laboratory submitting the documentation.

Laboratories requesting (or maintaining) Kentucky Laboratory Certification must prepare a QAP and associated SOPs that formally state how the laboratory intends to meet the requirements established in the State's regulation. These documents must be organized, concise, accurate and provide the user with all of the necessary information pertaining to their laboratory operation, including but not limited to:

- Laboratory organization and responsibility
- Process used to identify clients' data quality objectives (DQO)
- SOPs with dates of last revision
- Field sampling procedures
- Laboratory sample receipt and handling procedures
- Instrument calibration procedures (may reference an SOP)
- Analytical procedures (may reference an SOP)
- Data reduction, validation, reporting and verification (may reference an SOP)
- Type of quality control checks and the frequency of their use (may reference an SOP)
- List schedules of internal and external system and data quality audits and inter-laboratory comparisons (may reference an SOP)
- Preventive maintenance procedures and schedules
- Corrective action contingencies
- Record keeping procedures

Laboratories that simply submit the laboratory certification requirements as their specific laboratory procedures (operation) have not complied with the principle requirement of a laboratory QAP or SOP. In order to be truly effective, these documents must reflect the actual policies and procedures utilized by the environmental laboratory applying for wastewater laboratory certification.